The specimens of *Antiornis* are yellow beneath and olive above. Several *Cettia* species have juveniles so coloured, but only in *C. flavolivaceus* do adults resemble juveniles in the yellow ventral plumage. Juveniles of *C. fortipes* in the British Museum although slightly more brownish-yellow beneath than adults, nowhere near approach the yellow of the under parts of the *Antiornis* series, *contra* Deignan. If the *Antiornis* series contains adults, it belongs with *Cettia flavolivaceus* and it seems that two of the four specimens I examined are adults. Specimens numbers 306292 and 332578 showed uneven "hunger-traces" across the tail feathers, while in 297814 a "hunger-trace" formed a straight line across all the tail feathers. 297818 bore no discernible "hunger-traces", but was considered closest in plumage detail and texture to 297814. Thus in the first two specimens the marked rectrices had grown at different times in the course of a moult, but in the third all the affected feathers had grown simultaneously as in the first (juvenile) plumage. Also, in the first two specimens the parietal region of the skull showed the degree of inflexibility typical of full maturity. Damage sustained by the skulls of the other two precluded the drawing of any conclusions along these lines. It is concluded that 306292 and 332578 are adults, and that 297814, and probably 297818, is a juvenile. The last two have slightly softer plumage but the difference is hardly noticeable. Mr. George Watson, *in litt.*, states the type of *Antiornis grahami* (not seen) to be closest in colour and amount of feathering to 306292, an adult.

In summary, the series of *A. grahami* contains adults and is therefore referable to *Cettia flavolivaceus*. With reference to the proportionate difference in tail-length, *grahami* is probably a tenable race of *C. flavolivaceus* inhabiting parts of Szechwan; more Chinese material would elucidate the position. It seems clear that *Antiornis grahami* Riley can be relegated to the synonymy of *Cettia flavolivaceus* (Blyth) and not to that of *Cettia fortipes davidiana* (Verreaux) as suggested by Deignan.

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On the occurrence and nomenclature of certain petrels in North America

by W. R. P. Bourne

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In the first volume of the *Handbook of North American Birds* (edited by R. S. Palmer, New Haven and London, 1962) a number of modifications of the classification and nomenclature of North American petrels accepted in the fifth and last edition of the *Check-list of North American Birds* published by the American Ornithologists' Union in 1957 were made partly on my advice. The more important ones were carefully documented and usually appear to have escaped criticism, but some minor points which did not appear to deserve such full treatment in the limited space available have been questioned in a review in the *Auk* 80:89, so it may be useful to place on record the reasons for these decisions here, together with a few comments on other points which have arisen since the book went to press.

1. The classification of the races of *Oceanites oceanicus*.

In the original description of *Procellaria oceanica* Kuhl took the name from a life-sized drawing of a bird captured at 37°S. off the mouth of the River Plate on 22nd December 1768 during Cook's first expedition. This drawing is still preserved in the British Museum (Natural History) together with a detailed description of the bird by Daniel Solander (Lysaght 1959). According to the drawing it had a short wing of about 138 mm., which agrees well with the small population occurring at the nearest breeding colony in the Falkland Islands, and is considerably smaller than the mean for the larger population breeding further to the south-east at South Georgia, which was subsequently designated as the breeding place of the type. In the circumstances, since the dimensions of the type agree with those of one of the smallest northern populations, and since there has been some confusion over the priority of the other names applied to them (Sheard 1943), it seemed best to refer all of them, including intermediate birds from South Georgia, to the typical form of the species, and the largest birds from Antarctica to the second valid form to be described, *Oceanites oceanicus exasperatus* Mathews, represented by a type with a wing of 155 mm. purchased in Leadenhall Market, London, on 2nd March 1905, now in the American Museum of Natural History. In following this course I was not "juggling with names" as suggested by the *Auk* reviewer, but reverting to the usage adopted by the first person to distinguish geographical variation in the species, G. M. Mathews, in the last complete check-list of the order Procellariiformes in 1934. The juggling occurred on the other side of the Atlantic.

2. The identity of the white-bellied storm-petrel of the genus *Fregetta* reported to come from Florida, currently referred to *F. tropica*.

The only evidence for the identity of this bird appears to be the original report by Lawrence in which he identifies it as "*Thalassidroma fregetta* (Sol.) Khul, *Thalassidroma leucogaster* Gould" and provides a good description which makes it clear among other things that the bird had a white breast. The specimen was last heard of in Philadelphia (Hellmayr & Conover 1948), where it was doubtless compared with the types of both *Fregetta tropica* and *Fregetta* (*grallaria*) *leucogaster* in the newly-acquired Gould collection, with a decision in favour of the latter. Mr. James Bond informs me that the latter is still there, and his description (wing 155 mm., tail 63 mm., tarsus proportionately short, with black markings on the upper tail-coverts) suggests that it is in fact both an example of the Tristan population of *F. grallaria*, and the same as the bird described by Lawrence. In identifying the bird from St. Marks, Florida, as *Fregetta grallaria leucogaster* I was therefore reverting to the original name used by the author who first described the specimen after the fullest possible confirmation of its identity.

3. The status of certain southern petrels on the North American list.

Since the *Auk* reviewer finally raises this problem, surely the most important question concerning this storm-petrel is not its identity, but whether it belongs on the North American list at all. It is one of no less than three southern petrels reported for North America for the first time by G. N. Lawrence in a single series of notes in 1851 and 1853. Mr. Eugene Eisenmann informs me that two of these, *Adamastor cinereus* and *Daption*

capensis, are still preserved in the American Museum of Natural History, while the third, *Fregetta* (*grallaria*) *leucogaster*, seems likely to have been compared with the type, so there seems no reason to doubt their identity. But it is much less certain where they all came from, because Lawrence obtained them all at second hand, and omits to mention either who collected them, or when they were taken. Only one of them has reappeared in over a century, and even this was originally identified as a ''Manks Shearwater'', ''*Puffinus anglorum*'' (which seems much more likely), and only after the passage of time and relabelling of skins as *Daption capensis* (Norton 1922). It seems possible that, as with various other southern petrels reported in the northern hemisphere in the last century, including a number reported for North America by Audubon only a dozen years before, all these birds were brought home by sailors from the South Seas and supplied to local naturalists who failed to enquire adequately concerning their origin. It is not unknown for such things to happen on this side of the Atlantic too.

4. Vernacular nomenclature.

Here I am to some extent in sympathy with the *Auk* reviewer, since I agree with him that it is desirable to adhere to some general standard for vernacular as well as scientific nomenclature. But as I have explained elsewhere (Bourne 1961) I hold that in this matter it is preferable that we should all attempt to conform to agreed international standards, rather than that different nations should adhere strictly to different, variable check-lists in the way that the *Auk* reviewer suggests for North America. Most of these national lists tend to preserve through all their protean transformations at the dictation of fashion a few favoured vernacular names for extreme rarities, names found nowhere else on land or sea, least where the birds concerned are common. Frigate Petrel and Collared Petrel are examples on our national list, and Black-tailed Shearwater and Harcourt's Petrel examples on the American one, which also calls our Frigate Petrel (equally rare there) by another equally outlandish name, White-faced Petrel, and includes among other things a Black Petrel totally different from the Black Petrel of New Zealand. International and not national standards are required for such matters, especially ones which reach the great bulk of bird-watchers such as popular field-guides. It still appears to me that it might be useful if in the case of widespread groups authors could fix upon and adhere to internationally acceptable standards, such as the first and only comprehensive guide to all seabirds, W. B. Alexander's ''Birds of the Ocean'' (second edition, London, 1955).

The next International Ornithological Congress is to be held in this country and this subject might be a useful one for the agenda.

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